



DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

EPISCOPAL CHURCH CENTER • 815 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017

William D. Dearnaley, News Director
Robert E. Vetter, Deputy News Director

Telephone: (212) 867-8400

DPS 86137

EDITORS: In early June, ten humanitarian aid workers in El Salvador were arrested, put on display and accused of aiding rebel causes. Upon learning of this action, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning wrote directly to Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte to express his concern. The text of Browning's letter follows. We will have more details in a future regular mailing.

I write to you to express concern for the well being of human rights and humanitarian workers in El Salvador. This concern is linked to the preservation of the due process of law and the protection of the innocent.

As the Primate and Chief Pastor of the Episcopal Church with episcopal authority for the Diocese of El Salvador, I write to express my deep and abiding concern at the news of the detention and public display of persons who have worked for humanitarian organizations. I write to urge you to take a personal interest in this situation and to use the authority of your office to insure that the physical safety and human rights of these detained persons are fully protected. The seriousness of public accusations against other churchworkers requires careful and impartial inquiry through the universally recognized legal procedures of jurisprudence which guarantee the protection of all innocent people.

I have a deep pastoral concern for all members of our Christian family in El Salvador who have served their country loyally and faithfully through their ministry to the many victims of civil strife and dislocation in El Salvador. They need your protection and the guarantee of a just legal process to insure that they have every opportunity to prove their innocence. The international Church community, which has supported them in their work, is keeping them in its prayers and intercessions.

As you know from our previous correspondence, by our support for you and your family in the time of your great distress, and the visit with you of some of my staff, I have the deepest respect and regard for you and the leadership you are providing for El Salvador in these tense and difficult days. I was greatly encouraged when I heard that you had again resumed direct conversations for peace in El Salvador. You are in my prayers as you undertake this peacemaking process. I have every confidence that the Church organizations and Churchworkers in El Salvador will continue to give this difficult process their loyal support.

I will continue to keep fully informed about the present situation and offer to support and assist you in ways you deem appropriate to uphold justice and the impartial process of the law in El Salvador.

s/ The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop and Primate.

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